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REMARKS

Claims 1-15 were pending. By this Amendment, claims 4 and 11 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claims 1, 7-10 and 12-15 have been amended to clarify the claimed subject matter. Claims 1-3, 5-10 and 12-15 remain pending upon entry of this Amendment, with claims 1, 7, 8, 14 and 15 being in independent form.

Claim 8 was objected to as purportedly having informalities. Claims 1-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as allegedly indefinite. Claims 1-7 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101.

In response, the application has been amended to address the formal matters referenced in the Office Action, as well as otherwise.

Withdrawal of the objection to the claims, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112 and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §101 is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-8 and 10-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly unpatentable over Chang et al. (US 6,765,693) in view of Morisaki et al. (US 7,570,375) and further in view of Nami et al. (US 5,162,860). Claims 2 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly unpatentable over Chang in view of Morisaki and Nami and further in view of Sugimoto et al. (US 6,274,282).

Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is allowable over the cited art, for at least the reason that the cited art does not disclose or suggest the aspects of the present application of causing to be performed, by the image forming apparatus, an image forming process including forming black only with the black recording liquid until the maximum black recording liquid incorporation amount is reached and, when the maximum black recording liquid incorporation amount is reached, forming black with a combination of (i) a composite black

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using a mixture of the cyan recording liquid, the magenta recording liquid, and the yellow recording liquid and (ii) the black color in a same amount as the maximum black recording liquid incorporation amount.

Such aspects enable a decrease of glossiness to be avoided by applying an image forming process in which black is formed only with black recording liquid until the maximum black recording liquid incorporation amount is reached, and thereafter black is formed with a combination of (i) a composite black (mixture of cyan recording liquid, magenta recording liquid, and yellow recording liquid) and (ii) the black recording liquid in the maximum black recording liquid incorporation amount.

Chang, as understood by applicant, proposes an approach for printing images using light black ink, wherein a combination of black ink and composite black (from CMY inks) is utilized.

As shown in Fig. 2 (reproduced below) of Chang, composite black is used prior to the black ink amount reaches a constant in the process of Chang. See also column 2 line 62 through column 3, line 17.

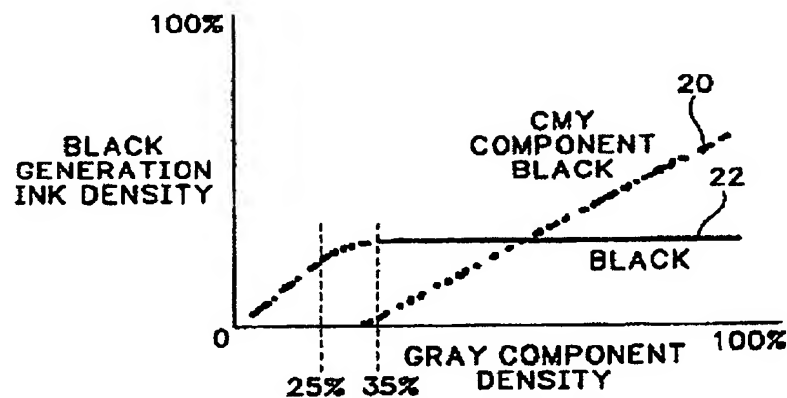


Figure 2

Applicant maintains that Chang clearly does NOT disclose or suggest forming black *only*

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with the black recording liquid until the maximum black recording liquid incorporation amount is reached and, when the maximum black recording liquid incorporation amount is reached, forming black with a combination of (i) a composite black using a mixture of the cyan recording liquid, the magenta recording liquid, and the yellow recording liquid and (ii) the black color in a same amount as the maximum black recording liquid incorporation amount.

The other cited references (including Morisaki, Nami and Sugimoto) likewise do NOT disclose or suggest the aforementioned aspects of the present application.

Nami, as understood by applicant, proposes an approach for forming a color image by mixing a plurality of coloring agents, and obtaining a desired glossiness by adjusting the quantity of a coloring agent of a predetermined color.

Nami, column 10, lines 51-57, which was cited in the Office Action, states as follows:

Since the image separation is arranged to be automatically discriminated, the labor of a user can be reduced. Furthermore, the tone image displayed uniform glossiness and the glossiness of the black characters could be reduced among the characters of the character/line image. As a result, an image displaying excellent quality could be obtained.

Thus, Nami proposes reducing glossiness in order to obtain improved image quality. On the other hand, as mentioned above, a motivation of the aforementioned aspects of the present application is to AVOID decrease of glossiness. Stated another way, Nami actually leads one skilled in the art AWAY from the aforementioned aspects of the present application.

Applicant submits that the cited art, even when considered along with common sense and common knowledge to one skilled in the art, does *NOT* render unpatentable said aforementioned aspects of the present application.

Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 7, 8, 14 and 15,

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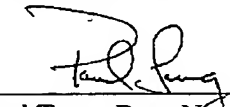
and the claims depending therefrom, are allowable over the cited art.

In view of the remarks hereinabove, applicant submits that the application is now allowable, and earnestly solicits the allowance of the application.

If the Examiner can suggest an amendment that would advance this application to condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition. The Patent Office is hereby authorized to charge any required fees in connection with this amendment, and to credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

Respectfully submitted,



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